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MADE IN TRIESTE. GEOPOLITICAL FEARS OF AN ISTRIANIST DISCOURSE ON THE MEDITERRANEAN

The Italian Istrianist discourse on the Mediterranean is discussed in the text. It has been developed by some writers, journalists and other intellectuals engaged in the exodus of Italian Istrians to Italy after World War II. That discourse underlines multiculturalism of Istria and conceives it in opposition to the Balkans.

Keywords: the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Istrian-ness

The drama which is perturbing the Balkans passes once more through Trieste, with even stronger pressure on Istria and Quarnero: the fear, the terror of the civil war which rages between the Croats and the Serbs involves the destiny of a land which is so close to us and which has matured for centuries between two illustrious civilizations of Europe, the Republic of Venice and the multinational Habsburg empire. For this reason, she grew up pacific and tolerant and had nothing in common with the hatred of race or religion that so often stained the Balkan regions with blood (Miglia 1994:44).

And here we have the 'Adriatic diversity', an outcome of a corsair, cosmopolitan, passionate quality which does not tolerate borders. A Triestine feels that he resembles more a Corfiot than an Udinese. Zadar is more similar to the Levantine Smyrna than to the Dinaric mountaineers from its rocky hinterland who had shelled Zadar for five years. In the same way, Venice is closer to Patras than to Treviso and there is no word about the lumbard whatsoever (Rumiz 1998:28).[1]

In 1918, when the first Yugoslavia was coming into being, Jovan Cvijić, the great Serbian geographer, published a book in French entitled *The Balkan peninsula: Human Geography* (*La péninsule balkanique. Géographie*

[1] All citations from French and Italian originals are translated into English by the author.

humaine). President of the commission for territorial questions at the peace conference preparing the Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919, influential human geographer, guest lecturer at Sorbonne invited by Paul Vidal de la Blache (George 1991:47), Cvijić was directly involved in the endeavour of putting Yugoslavia on the map. His voluminous work on the Balkan peninsula was thus to provide a human geographical ground for the new nation-state of the Southern Slavs or Yugoslavs. Consequently, he had to minimize the ethnic and cultural diversity of the populations on the territory, claiming, for example, that the languages spoken between Ljubljana and Salonika, and between the Soča river and Black Sea, were identical or very similar (Cvijić 1918:271). However, such obligatory statements boldly asserting Yugoslav national unity are few and in clear discrepancy with his extensive descriptions of the Balkan diversity.

Contrary to the then prevailing opinion of geographers that the northwestern borderline of the Balkan peninsula was the Sava river up to its confluence with Kolpa (Kupa), from there following the Kolpa river (the border between Slovenia and Croatia) to the west and finally continuing in the straight line toward Rijeka in the Gulf of Quarnero, Cvijić insisted that the Dinaric Alps as the Adriatic border of the Balkan peninsula should be followed up to the northwest to their very junction with the Alps. To this effect, he proposed the Soča river as a borderline of the peninsula in its northwestern corner (Cvijić 1918:6-7). As Soča flows into the Adriatic west of Trieste, not only Istria but also Trieste found themselves in the Cvijić's Balkans.

The insistence of Cvijić on the Dinaric Alps as the criterion of demarcating the Balkans can be explained — if we refrain from noticing his implicit geopolitical considerations about the 'true' northwestern Yugoslav border — by the emphasis he gave to the Dinaric world and its populations. Of the four "psychic types" of Yugoslavs (together with Bulgarians) that he identified — the Dinaric, the Central, the Oriental Balkan, and the Pannonian type — the first type was described much more extensively than the other three. Although Cvijić recognized that the Dinaric populations consisted of different ethnic groups with different religions (Roman Catholic, Orthodox Christian and Moslem), his description of them was basically a celebration of the Dinaric Serbs (and Montenegrins) as the best stock of all the Serbs and thereby the best stock of — and the model for — the Yugoslavs. Only by reducing temporarily other Dinaric peoples into the Orthodox Serbs was he able to claim that all the qualities of the Western Yugoslavs were best manifested in the Dinarics (ibid.:282) whose national consciousness was more developed than in other Yugoslavs and who burned with desire to take vengeance for the battle of Kosovo (ibid.). Among their important psychic traits were the military virtues developed through the history of insubordination of the *hajduks* and *uskoks* (brigands) to the Ottomans (ibid.:292). They were energetic and impulsive (ibid.:292-293); they had vivid imagination (ibid.:297); their soul was affected by a historical sadness (ibid.:294); they

indulged in diverse acts dictated by their mystical logic, such as in the case of a Montenegrin chief of the Ozrinići tribe from the 18th century to whom one ancestor appeared in his dream and ordered him to exterminate his neighbours who had converted to Islam, which he did (ibid.:296). They were endowed with a capacity of keen observation and there were no feebleminded among them (ibid.:297).

The Dinaric psychic type was divided by Cvijić into five varieties. The fifth variety was termed the "Adriatic variety". To include the people from the Adriatic littoral, reputed for their peacefulness and civility, into the rude and belligerent Dinaric category might be highly surprising. Is it not absurd to depict the Dinarics as populations unaffected by foreign influences and modern civilization (ibid.:282), and then to add to them the people from the coast and islands who were for centuries or millenia exposed to intense communications within the Mediterranean basin? However, this surprise is thwarted by another surprise since Cvijić splits the Adriatic variety into two groups: the group of the Zagora (hinterland) and the littoral group. Here is the source of Braudel's description of the Mediterranean *pays en espalier*, those narrow ribbons of the Mediterranean life stretching between the coast and the steep foothills of the mountains. In his description of the Dalmatian *pays en espalier* with the immense Dalmatian Zagora, i.e. the Dinaric mountain range, in the immediate hinterland, Braudel draws heavily upon Cvijić. The harsh contrast referred to by Braudel, the contrast of two *genres de vie*, one pastoral, nomadic and bellicose, another a combination of gardening and fishing, stable and domesticated, coincides with Cvijić's contrast of the two groups of the Adriatic variety. Cvijić's inclusion of the inhabitants of the hinterland (i.e. rude pastoralists but also the *hajduks*, the *uskoks*, i.e. brigands hiding in the mountains and occasionally organizing incursions in the lands under the Ottoman control) in the Adriatic variety, characterized, according to him, by the Mediterranean way of life (*genre de vie*) (ibid.:356) therefore preceded Braudel's larger notion of the Mediterranean as the interpenetration of the mountains and the sea. As we have learned from the paper by Jasna Čapo Žmegač (see this volume), Branimir Gušić, a Croatian geographer, shared the same view that these two worlds, although in harsh contrast, were two parts of the same whole. It seems that all three of them were induced to this view by their very discipline, the human geography which puts more stress on the *longue durée* communications than does social anthropology.[2]

[2] Braudel considered himself an "abortive geographer" (see Lacoste 1988). The heavy dependence of Braudel's thesis on the Mediterranean upon human geography is clearly visible.

Istria vs. Balkania

Cvijić's and Braudel's (and Gušić's) point of view does not seem to be accepted by the local understandings of the Mediterranean on the Eastern Adriatic coast, and certainly not in Istria. According to Istrian notions, the Mediterranean is narrower: it is limited to the coast and the islands. The Dinaric mountain range to the southeast of Rijeka is regarded as an already another world, generally called the Balkans.

Istria, the northernmost peninsula of the Mediterranean, is generally considered a part of the Mediterranean, with the exemption of certain recent geographers who consider the Upper Adriatic a sub-Mediterranean zone (Ogrin 1993:25-34). The karstic ridge of the Dinaric barrier which runs along the coast and separates Istria from the continent, is considered, as in analogous cases, the boundary of the Mediterranean. The world behind the precipitous edge of this ridge, which is known to geographers as well as locals as the Karstic edge, is only exceptionally perceived as a part of the Balkans. It is called Karst: *Kras* in Slovenian, *Carso* in Italian. Here, in their northwestern extremity, the Dinaric Alps are but a low and narrow limestone plateau, incomparably weaker a natural barrier than that of Dalmatian Zagora. Cvijić, who insisted that Karst as the northwestern end of the Dinaric Alps still belonged to the Balkan peninsula, also felt obliged to add that the Slovenians who settled it did not represent the pure Dinaric type. This distinction was virtually inevitable as the Slovenians from Karst never shared heroic oral traditions of Dinaric populations more to the southeast. For this purpose, Cvijić introduced a secondary distinction of epic and lyric Dinaric peoples (1918:281, 374).

In the symbolic geography of Guido Miglia, one of the most fertile Italian Istrian promoters of the Istrian-ness or Istrian identity, the Balkans or Balkania, *la Balcania*, as he deprecatorily calls this puzzling land, begin in the Dinaric mountains above Rijeka.[3] From there, from the vast mountainous world which lies behind it, the menacing incursors were always coming into Istria: the foreigners of different cultural codes, not used to Istrian ways and often irreverent of them, they were the most dangerous of all the invaders of Istria.

It is not insignificant that in his indefatigable rumination over Istrian-ness Miglia never mentions that the cherished Istrian multi--ethnicity, multi-culturality, diversity and hybridity are also the outcome of centuries of immigration of groups of families brought to Istria by its secular masters, the Venetians and the Habsburgs. Italian colonists from the surroundings of Bologna proved to be not enough resistant to the adversities of the Istrian vicious circle of epidemics and famines. Venetian *provveditori* preferred to settle in the Istrian countryside more robust

[3] Rijeka was considered the northwestern boundary of the Balkan peninsula by the majority of geographers before Cvijić. Istrian peninsula was therefore considered a region on the very border with the Balkans.

colonizers from Dalmatia, Montenegro, Albania, even Greece and Cyprus. There were among them the transhumant pastoralists from Dalmatian Zagora, called the Morlacchs by Venetians,[4] but also the *uskoks* and the *hajduks* (brigands) from the same border region between the Venetian and Ottoman empire. They were not entirely untameable, though some attempts by Venice to turn them into docile peasants failed. Such was the case with an attempt of settling a group of *hajduks* from Boka Kotorska in the hinterland of Pula in the 17th century (Bertoša 1995:180-244).[5] This must have been in Braudel's mind when he wrote the following about hinterland populations descending to the Adriatic coast:

> The man can domesticate himself. If he is a brigand, he transforms himself into a policeman's auxiliary; if he is perhaps a colonizer, he is directed towards the islands or, more often, by the concern of Venice, to Istria where empty fields are more abundant than elsewhere (Braudel 1990 (1949):63).

As much as Guido Miglia is silent about these *longue durée* immigrants who substantially provided Istria with its characteristic hybridity,[6] he does not establish a relationship between those and more recent immigrants, who concern him far more intimately: 1) the immigrants who moved into the houses and possessions of the Istrian exiles to Trieste in the *esodo* years 1946-1956 (Miglia is one of these exiles; he lives in Trieste); 2) the Croatian and Bosnian Muslim refugees fleeing from war-affected areas in the 1990s. Among the immigrants to the Istrian towns which remained almost empty or half-empty after the *esodo*, there were also those originating from the parts of Yugoslavia identified by Miglia as *Balkania*. They were few in the decade of the "exodus", when predominantly Istrian peasants moved in, but they were more numerous later on, especially in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Turk and the Muezzin

What has the Triestine discourse on the *istrianità* which revolves around the notions of tolerance, respect of the other and co-existence (*convivenza*) to tell about the Muslims in Istria? In the 1990s, when this discourse was taking shape, Muslims from Bosnia-Herzegovina were coming to Istria primarily as refugees. Guido Miglia, who at that time intensely wrote articles about Istria for diverse Triestine and Istrian journals, had mixed

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[4] For the discussion of the term Morlacch, see e.g. Malcolm 1996; Pavlović 1998.

[5] An interesting account of the *hajduks* and their continuing presence in the imageries of Dinaric populations can be found in Žanić (1998).

[6] When celebrating Istrian "proudness of being hybrid", Miglia approvingly quotes Giorgio Strehler, a stage director whose description of Istrian genetic and cultural diversity is curiously "eugenic". The Istrian world is tall, blond and blue-eyed: a gigantic and deep blue-eyed Dalmatian grandfather, a French grandmother and a Franco--Dalmatian mother, a copy of her father who is Austrian and blond (Miglia 1994:64).

feelings about them: on the one hand they were undoubtedly innocent victims, possibly reminiscent of his own experience of a refugee, on the other hand they were coming from those belligerent Dinaric areas and they were strange in an ineffable way (see Miglia 1994:104-105).

But there were Bosnian Muslims in Istria also before. They had come there as immigrant workers in previous decades. Since historic centres of coastal Istrian towns, almost empty after the exodus of the Italians, were not valued and renovated throughout the socialist period, every family that had moved into empty houses or apartments would have also moved out as fast as it could. Only the least fortunate remained.

In Piran, the same as in Koper and Izola, the influx of immigrants was particularly strong as the newly determined Slovenian coast, neighbouring to Trieste, became a theatre of intense industrialization. Those immigrants who could not afford an apartment or a house outside Piran — in Lucija or Portorož — where the majority settled after having stayed in Piran for several years, had to stay in the old centre, in dark apartments without modern facilities, not too dissimilar to those in the historic centre of Palermo. This is why Bosnian Muslims are common in the old town of Piran. Bosnians (including Bosnian Serbs and Croats) and Croats (whose major immigration was in the first two decades after World War II) were the most numerous immigrants from other Yugoslav republics to Slovenia. Labour force from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo migrated most intensely to Slovenia in the 1970s and the percentage of Muslims among Bosnian immigrants was at that time far more important than that of Bosnian Serbs or Croats (see Mežnarić 1986:71-73).

In his travelogue *The Wind from the mainland: Istria and Rijeka, notes from the travel between the Balkans and Mediterranean*, Paolo Rumiz, another journalist and writer from Trieste, tells that in Piran, in warm evenings, old Muslims gather at a certain concealed place near the convent of Saint Francis. They come discreetly, one after another, spread their carpets on the ground and start, in the refreshing shadow of old Venetian walls, with the very long ritual of preparing Turkish coffee (Rumiz 1994:25). The description of their meeting is quite detailed; it looks exactly as a journalist report from the field. I was tempted to spot the place of their gatherings and to check out the story, so I went there with my student from Piran who knows every corner of the old town. It was impossible to find the place; no place there fit the description and no place seemed appropriate for the gathering of a group of people who would want to remain unnoticed. I also inquired a bit around whether anyone had heard about it, but without any result.

Gianni Giuricin is an exile from Rovinj. In 1981, he published a collection of sketches entitled *Istria is Far Away: An Exodus Without History*. In the sketch entitled *Istria primo amore* (Giuricin 1981:146-150) he tells about his first visit to Rovinj after his exile thirty years ago. He rented a room on the top floor of a house in the oldest part of the centre.

No Istrian families lived in the house. The family which lived immediately under him "must have been of Turkish origin" since he often heard a fat woman calling the only man in the family, presumably her husband, "Mohammed". The third day of his sweet but also bitter stay in Rovinj he decided to go to the beach. He was lying there and enjoying in the striking blue colour of the sea and the sky, observing familiar details on the bottom of the sea. He was overwhelmed by warm memories of his careless childhood on the beach, he felt the presence of the white *campanile* which dominates the town. His absorption in this rêverie was suddenly interrupted by a woman's voice which repeated the word "Mohammed". He realized that these "Turks" also enjoyed this sea which had become their sea, although they entered the water differently: they do not jump into the water, as Giuricin and other Istrian boys used to, they enter it gradually, pandemonically screaming as the water is cool.

The Turkish variety of the Arab name "Mohammed" is "Mehmed". The Bosnian Muslim who bears the Prophet's name is Mehmed or Meho (a more informal variety). It is not likely that Giuricin really came across a Turkish family in Rovinj, even less so that the head of this presumably Turkish family bore the name Mohammed. In all probability, the family was Bosnian Muslim or Albanian. It cannot be excluded, however, that the man was really called Mohammed, though this variety of name is rare in Bosnia-Herzegovina.[7]

This contemplation of Muslims getting familiar with Istrian beaches might have been the source of Claudio Magris, again a writer from Trieste, when he claimed in *Corriere della sera* in 1990 that the children and grandchildren of those who had moved into the empty houses of the Istrian *esuli* should be considered autochthonous Istrians: those houses are their homes, and as children they were playing their games in those streets and at charming beaches (see Miglia 1994:25-26). It seems that this argument has since become a *topos* in Istrianist dialectic repertory. Acknowledging that the children of Dinaric parents who were born in Istria are autochthonous Istrians and that the second and the third generation of Dinaric "invaders" are likely to be Istrianized (and Mediterraneanized), is thus assumedly also a sign of Istrian-ness and a proof of Istrian tolerance.

Nonetheless, it might be difficult to accept this theorem and the Istrianist theory might not always be persuasive enough to do away with doubts and ambivalence. Do those Muslims really accept Istrian autochthonous culture codes? Are they really becoming Istrians? Since the Istrianist theory posits that the Muslims are becoming "the fourth root" of the autochthonous Istrian oak (the other three being the Italians or "Istro--Venetians", the Croats, and the Slovenians), it would be inappropriate simultaneously to insist that Muslims are not really behaving in harmony

[7] Bosnian Muslims are systematically labeled "Turks" in the Serbian chauvinist discourse.

with Istrian or Istrianist codes.[8] One way to avoid this censorship is to tell it indirectly, i.e., to quote a native, as Rumiz does. He quotes an authoritative informant: a hybrid Istrian of an Italian father and a Croatian mother who always repeats to Croats that they have to fight for the defense of the rights of Italians, because to fight for their rights means to defend Istria, while not to fight for them means once again to hand over Istrians to external hegemonies. The same person is quoted asking a rhetorical question why so many Muslims, who have been immigrants in Istria for thirty years, do not make a compromise with Istrian habits. And why, on the contrary, do Istrians undervalue and almost eradicate themselves, why do they not impose their culture although they have been here for centuries? (Rumiz 1994:72) The answer to the question how do Istrians eradicate themselves in front of the Muslims might be hidden in Guido Miglia's account of what happened with the house of his parents in Pula:

[8] The invention of and the elaboration upon the mythical metaphor of Istria as an autochthonous oak with three (and now four) roots is due to the same Triestine writers and journalists: Magris, Miglia and Rumiz. The metaphor implicitly refers to the evergreen holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) which had been an important component of Istrian forest before the deforestation, which was allegedly caused by the Venetian exploitation, took place.

> Now in that house, two hundred metres away from the Arena, they have established a mosque for the Muslims who came to Pula and you can hear in the evening the voice of the muezzin spreading over the lawns of my childhood (Miglia 1994:41).

'Civiltà istro-veneta' vs. 'primitive tribalism'

For Guido Miglia, the Mediterranean is a shorthand for the Mediterranean civilization, while the latter is virtually a synonym for the Italian, Venetian or Istro-Venetian civilization. His Mediterranean has something to do with centuries or, better, millenia of culture.

> Pula means coastal Istria, coastal Istria means Italian Istria, a region which has kept alive the most fecund Mediterranean civilization, as its monuments and costumes prove (Miglia 1994:78).

Contrary to this Latinist, even Italian exclusivism, the Paolo Rumiz's Mediterranean seems at the first glimpse more democratic since it is presumably defined in terms of social sciences. The contrast between "the Zagora" and "the littoral" — in his terms between the warlike pastoralist nomads and the docile gardeners and fishermen; or between the town and the country — is much more pronounced, and this in terminology which is more precise and refers to the problematics of modern social sciences. Thus, for example, the latifundium is opposed to the intensive Mediterranean horticulture (Rumiz 1994:58). This is rather surprising, since the latifundium zone is located somewhere in the Dinaric world or behind it, whereas the Mediterranean latifundium is superbly ignored. Indeed, even Karst which immediately surrounds Rumiz's home Trieste and as a place that Triestines visit on Sundays must be quite familiar to him, and which is to a significant extent an area of small property and intensive arboriculture (with important share of vine-growing) is oddly located on the other side of the cultural boundary which, according to him, runs at the foothils of the Karst plateau.

> And so the authentic and secular boundary reemerges against the ephemeral borders traced by the politics. It is the Karstic ridge, the white line which from the Učka mountain points to the northwest, touching Trieste. This is the line which separates two cultures: on the one hand the Mediterranean, the individualism, the world of vineyards and hills, on the other hand the arid pastoral expanses of the Dinaric world, a land rich with strong myths and often ferociously self--contained (Rumiz 1994:112).

The real, secular, cultural, non-political boundary therefore miraculously coincides with the ancient Venetian-Austrian border:

> This is a sign that the Istrian identity prevails over national identities, and especially that the real boundary, not political but cultural one, has nothing to do with geographic maps. The line which divides the two worlds is another one, it is this Karstic ridge which from the Učka mountain points to the northwest, towards Črni kal and beyond. Here the Venetian and Mediterranean influence ends, the vineyards and hills and intensive culture end, as well as the sandstone and the trigonometry of *campanili*. The castles on the top of the hills, and the houses in straight lines like in small towns disappear. There begin dispersed villages, latifundia, pastoral expanses, an arid world, marked by the ferocious defense of space rather than the cycle of seasons, a world rich with strong myths and collective *epos* rather than secret magic. And it is also because of the clash of these two cultures that, more to the south, in Bosnia and Dalmatia, the war broke out (Rumiz 1994:79-80).

Despite his narrow conception of the Mediterranean, Rumiz's affinity with Cvijić is apparent. Rumiz also insists on the northwest extremity of Dinaric Alps as an ultimate criterion to determine the boundary of the Balkans, although he is careful to exempt Trieste from Dinaric world. And this regardless of the fact that Trieste was not part of the Venetian but, the same as Karst, the Habsburg world!

Rumiz, however, is much more prone to biologize the cultural difference than Cvijić. He claims, for instance, that people in Gospić[9] are genetically warriors (1994:103), that the antagonism between the mountain and the coastal town is "genetic" (ibid.:104), whereas Istrian "bastards" originating from mixed marriages are "natural carriers of the DNA of ethnic tolerance" (ibid.:111). Naturally, the motive for insisting on the Dinaric criterion seems to be inverted: where Cvijić saw the natural habitat of the best Yugoslav stock, Rumiz sees the natural habitat of the worst threat to Trieste and her cherished Istria. A rather odd characteristic of this "translation of Cvijić into Triestine Italian" is an implicit but perfectly unambiguous extension of this menacing Dinaric habitat to Karst immediately behind Trieste (which is inhabited by Slovenians) and indirectly to central Slovenia as well.

The sheer use of presumably social scientific terminology by Rumiz does not entail any dilution of his thick essentalism. Not unexpectedly, the war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina was in his opinion a manifestation of Dinaric tribalisms, the setting down of tribal accounts, the consequence of a clash of cultures. Miglia made the same conclusion. More surprisingly perhaps, the same view of the war was shared by several academic sociologists conducting research on Istrian identity and simultaneously celebrating it (see Bergnach 1995; Bernardi 1995). In Laura Bergnach's view, for instance, the Istrian language of co-existence is opposed to the fundamentalist pathologies of the Balkans; the secularism of Istria is

[9] Small town in Lika, Croatia.

opposed to the integralism of the Balkans; its constructive rationality to the other's destructive (ir)rationality; etc. (Bergnach 1995:55-57).

Concluding remarks

The invention of the Mediterranean in the Triestine Istrianist discourse took place in the years of separation of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia--Herzegovina from Yugoslavia, when the Italian minority in Istria found itself divided between two new nation-states and the fear of extension of the war in the delicate Istrian multi-ethnic environment became acute. The mobilization to counter different nationalist efforts disruptive of inter--ethnic tolerance developed into a trans-national regionalist movement, based on the postulate of the Istrian identity.

The essential divide underpinning this construction of Istrian-ness is the one between Istria and the Balkans (or Dinaric world). Istria is considered a part of the Mediterranean, whereas the Dinaric world immediately behind the coast embodies an "anti-Mediterranean", and dangerous world which is a permanent threat to the Mediterranean civilization on the eastern shore of the Adriatic. The narrowly conceived Mediterranean of the local notions (only islands and coastal ribbons of intensive horticulture, to the exclusion of mountains and pastoralism) virtually coincides with the extent of Venetian empire in the eastern Adriatic. The secular frontier between the Venice and Ottoman (and partly Habsburg) empires with its long history of incursions, runaways, evasions, brigandage and piracy provides an interpretive model for most of subsequent calamities in the region.

There is another if less essential divide for the construction of Istrian-ness: the one between Istria and the *Mezzogiorno* (the Italian south). When following the trail of this contrast, the rumination over Istrian-ness has naturally to become more reserved about the Mediterranean-ness of Istria, though it is not indispensable to repudiate it. Here, the talk about the Habsburg legacy of the "strong sense of state" might come to the fore.

> Trieste, Istria and Dalmatia, and naturally Rijeka, had the strong sense of state, the sense which is fundamental to any advanced civil society, whereas Italy never had it... (Miglia 1994:124).

Miglia also compares Trieste to "the Naples of the North, talkative, inconclusive, but without the cunning of the southerners, without corruption, without Mafia and Camorra; on the contrary, defenseless, honest, with a strong sense of state which is a pure Habsburg legacy" (1994:89).[10]

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[10] In 1912, the Triestine writer Umberto Saba (whose mother was a Jew and father a Catholic) wrote about the situation of Jews in Trieste. He believed that in this big merchant port the population was already *too southern* to allow the Nordic disease of

The notion of Mediterranean is introduced in this discourse in order to provide a "deeper meaning" of the Istro-Venetian civilization or culture, and thereby privilege the Italian component of Istria. In the same move, the notion is reduced to the sheer expression of presumed Italian cultural superiority, despite its eventual masquerade in the terminology of social sciences.

In this role, the notion of the Mediterranean itself is of limited interest to its local producers and consumers. Compared to the production of a "Mediterranean utopia", which is an on-going process within a plethora of Mediterranean networks connecting the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean (but primarily those of the West Mediterranean), this Istrianist kind of talk about the Mediterranean is essentially secluded. It does not participate in the endeavour of searching for another kind of universalism, Mediterranean universalism based on pluralism, and against Mediterranean particularisms and isolationisms (Fabre 1994:10). The Mediterranean of this discourse is the past Mediterranean only, not the actual and even less the future Mediterranean. It is a petrified Mediterranean, a reflection of a myth of Venice, not a dynamic notion. When it comes to future, the signifier "Mediterranean" is replaced by "Europe" and the future Istrian-ness is envisaged as Europe. This Europe is conceived in the same defensive and potentially exclusive terms as Istrian-ness: Europe means tolerance, respect of others, peaceful co-existence, multi-ethnicity, etc. (see Bergnach 1995:58). Multi-cultural effort, inherent in the Mediterranean utopia, is, on the contrary, an effort to counter the hegemony of the "Euro-Mediterranean" and to take into account the geopolitical realities of the Mediterranean. As Fethi Benslama says, referring to secular discords in the Mediterranean space:

> The Mediterranean in its life-size is the Balkans and Sarajevo is its restrained principle (Benslama 1994:17).

This applies to *Serenissima* as well.

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anti-Semitism to grow into epidemics (Matard-Bonucci 1998:227). The cruel irony of history was that the only *extermination* camp in Italy was located in Trieste.

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MADE IN TRIESTE. GEOPOLITIČKI STRAHOVI ISTARSKOG DISKURZA O MEDITERANU

SAŽETAK

Autor analizira istarski diskurz o Istri i Mediteranu, kakvoga su početkom devedesetih godina, raspadom druge Jugoslavije i početkom rata u Hrvatskoj te Bosni i Hercegovini, počeli razvijati posebice tršćanski spisatelji, novinari i drugi intelektualci angažirani oko problema poratnoga egzodusa talijanskih Istrana u Italiju. U središtu autorove analize djela su dvojice tršćanskih pisaca i novinara, Guida Miglie i Paola Rumiza.

U "tršćanskom" istarskom diskurzu Istra je predstavljena kao multietnička i mulitkulturna regija koju određuju miroljubivost, kozmopolitizam i tolerancija. Takav je diskurz u doba rata u Hrvatskoj imao dvostrani učinak: pridonosio je smanjivanju ratne opasnosti u Istri, ali pridonosio je i obnovi defenzivno oblikovanog tršćanskog istarskog identiteta u suprotnosti s "Balkanom". U članku je posebno analizirana fasciniranost istarskoga diskurza s (bosanskim) muslimanima: u tome se diskurzu oni pokušavaju integrirati u istarsko multukulturno i mulitetničko obzorje, iako ne bez izrazite ambivalencije.

Mediteran je u tome istarskome diskurzu, isto kao i Istra, predstavljen u oštrome kontrastu s Balkanom. Okosnica je različitih inačica toga diskurza "strateška" uporaba poimanja Mediterana kao najšireg okvira unutar kojega se osmišlja i favorizira "mletačka" Istra (i mletačko razdoblje Istre) nasuprot "nemletačkoj" Istri i njezinu balkanskom zaleđu.

Ključne riječi: Mediteran, Balkan, istrijanstvo